



49th Death Anniversary of a Freedom Fighter: Allama Mashriqi

A Tribute by Nasim Yousaf

The unsung hero brought freedom to his people, but never sought credit.

Allama Mashriqi, a world-renowned mathematician, Islamic scholar, and founder of the Khaksar Movement (Khaksar Tehrik) died at Mayo Hospital in Lahore (Pakistan) on August 27, 1963. He was buried in Ichhra (located on Ferozpur Road between Gulberg and Mozzang), from where he launched his Khaksar Movement 82 years ago. His death anniversary will be observed on August 27 in Lahore and other places. A large number of people are expected to visit his grave to pay homage and offer prayers.

Mashriqi founded the Khaksar Movement (Khaksar Tehrik) in 1930 to remove his nation from the clutches of foreign rule. In 1934, Mashriqi started “Al-Islah” weekly from Lahore to spread the Movement’s message in India and abroad and to bring about an uprising. The newspaper helped the Movement spread quickly. An article on the said publication appeared in the academic journal *Pakistaniaat* (USA) under the title “Khaksar Movement Weekly ‘Al-Islah’s’ Role Toward Freedom.” Furthermore, on August 08, 1938, *The Times of India* wrote:

“The publication of Al-Islah gave a fresh impetus to the [Khaksar] movement which spread to other regions such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran [as well as Bahrain, Burma, Ceylon, Egypt, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Yemen, and some countries of Europe].”

Using the power of his Khaksar Tehrik, Mashriqi mobilized the public and heroically fought for the independence of British India. He did not rest until the foreign rulers had left the country. With his death, a chapter of the freedom movement of the Indian sub-continent was closed.

News of Mashriqi’s passing was widely reported by newspapers in Pakistan and abroad. Followers and admirers from around the globe mourned his death and his family received countless condolence messages. Media from West and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), intellectuals, leaders, and others also paid glowing tributes to Mashriqi. The President of Pakistan, Mohammad Ayub Khan, sent a message to Mashriqi’s family stating:

“I am very much grieved to learn that your husband has passed away. He was a great scholar and organiser who had given up a brilliant academic future to serve the people, as he thought right. He was also a man with courage of his conviction. May his soul rest in eternal peace. Please accept my heart-felt sympathy in your bereavement.”

The media also wrote editorials and columns praising Mashriqi. *The Eastern Examiner* (Chittagong, Bangladesh) wrote in an editorial on August 29, 1963:

“In the death of Allama Enayatullah Khan Mashriqi, not only an important chapter of the independence movement finally closes, but also comes to an end the career of one in the subcontinents most colourful personalities, a mathematical genius, an intellectual and a leader of the first rank. Allama Mashrqi . . . rose to political prominence with the birth of his Khaksar movement . . . Many years of Allama Mashriqi’s life were spent in jail. Even after independence he underwent imprisonment on more than one occasion, though his ardour for his causes never ebbed.

His death...will be universally mourned, particularly in Pakistan where it has caused a void. Not only to the freedom struggle, but also to the world of knowledge and science that he made his greatest contributions. In years to come posterity will recognise him as one of Pakistan’s greatest intellectual an[d] political leaders, but one who unfortunately remained misunderstood throughout his life.”

Over 100,000 people attended Mashriqi's funeral. During the procession, his face was covered with flower petals, as the masses watched from streets, trees, balconies, or wherever they could find space. The procession culminated at the Khaksar Tehrik's headquarters in Icchra, where Mashriqi was laid to rest, as per his will. A 101 gun-salute was accorded to him at the time of his burial. I saw the funeral firsthand, as I was standing on the vehicle that carried the respected Mashriqi's body. An account of Mashriqi's funeral is published in my book entitled *Allama Mashriqi & Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan: Two Legends of Pakistan*.

To further enlighten the public about this great man, I shall soon be publishing another article, which is entitled “Men Like Allama Mashriqi are Born Once In Centuries.” For the benefit of the media, researchers, and other readers, the following Facebook pages have been established on the respected Allama Mashriqi:

- 1) “Nation Mourns Death of Legendary Freedom Fighter, Allama Mashriqi”
<https://www.facebook.com/AllamaMashriqi.1>
- 2) Nobel Prize Nominee Allama Mashriqi - Founder Khaksar Tehrik
<https://www.facebook.com/allamamashraqi>

May God rest his soul in eternal peace.

Nasim Yousaf is a scholar and historian who has presented papers at U.S. conferences and written many articles and books. He has also contributed articles to the “Harvard Asia Quarterly,” “Pakistaniaat,” and the “World History Encyclopedia (USA).” His forthcoming books are “Allama Mashriqi Narrowly Escapes the Gallows,” “Mahatma Gandhi & My Grandfather, Allama Mashriqi,” and “World Famous Personalities in Microfinance and Poverty Alleviation: Nobel Prize Nominee Dr. Akhtar Hameed Khan, Nobel Prize Laureate Professor Muhammad Yunus and President Barack Obama’s Mother, Dr. S. Ann Dunham.”

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